

believe I'm the one to do that. You cannot be all things to all people, try to keep every single group—you've got to call them as you see them, as the umpires do in the World Series. I have done it, and I believe that's why the American people will put their trust in me.

And yes, you had to stand for principle. You heard the revisionists out there tonight trying to make something of it. But I looked into the camera and told the American people that Saddam Hussein's aggression will not stand, and it didn't stand.

I really believe that tonight——

Audience members. We want Bush! We want Bush! We want Bush!

The President. I believe that right here, right here at this rally, the first post-debate event, we are starting to move. We are going to close this thing up, and we're going to win it on November 3d.

I'm going to stay out on the road. A while back I said I'll do what it takes to win, and I mean I'm going to outthrust this guy, outwork him. I'll take my message to the American people. Let him talk about making Government bigger. I want to get that deficit down by getting rid of some of this taxation and getting rid of some of this Government spending.

I loved it when I told the American taxpayer—tomorrow, listen, you'll hear the last—just a few hours ago, you hear them talk about tax the rich. You cab drivers, you beauticians, you schoolteachers, watch your purse. They're going to come right after you. We cannot let that happen to the American people.

With all respect, with all respect, I had a lot of fun when I reminded some of the media about that bumper sticker, "Annoy the Media." "Annoy the Media. Reelect

George Bush." I probably shouldn't have done it. You know, they always have the last word. But, gosh, that was fun. [*Laughter*]

Well, I have never lost confidence. I have always been convinced, because of our record and because of my belief in America as a rising nation, that we would win this election. And tonight I'm never more certain of it.

That Clinton-Gore ticket would make the Carter years look like a bonanza. We cannot go back to the tax-and-spend years: interest rates up at 21 percent and inflation up through the roof, every senior citizen getting wiped out, the "misery index" going through Gore's ozone hole up there someplace. We're not going to go back. We're going to go forward, because we are America. And my confidence is with the American worker, not with the big Government. Besides that, we've got the best First Lady in the world, and we'd better keep her there.

So thank you. All I ask now is that you take this enthusiasm, do what the Governor tells you: Get to the polls. Get our message of hope and opportunity and power to the people, out to the voters of Michigan. We will win this State, and we will win the national election.

Thank you. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 9:35 p.m. at the Lansing Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Mel McDaniel, Fred Travalena, and Wynonna Judd. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Question-and-Answer Session in Atlanta, Georgia

October 20, 1992

Mr. Nigut. We want to welcome everyone to our town hall meeting, "Ask George Bush." Mr. President, we're delighted that you could be with us in Georgia this evening. We have, as you know, an audience

of 33 people who say they are still undecided voters. Just before you came into the studio I asked them to tell me, after last night's debate, how many were still unde-

cided. Most of them raised their hand, said they're still trying to make up their mind. So this is your opportunity to address their questions.

The President. That sounds like a reasonable deal. They all look relatively sane and—[laughter].

The Economy

Mr. Nigut. Let me start, to get the ball rolling, and then turn immediately to questions from the audience—ask you a quick question. Coming out of the debates last night, there are some people who say that the campaign schedules today say a lot about how these last 2 weeks of the campaign is playing out. Your opponent Governor Clinton is off campaigning in States that at this stage of the campaign typically would no longer be vulnerable to a Democratic candidate, but they feel they are. You've come south where many people feel you should have been able to build your base a long time ago.

The last poll that we conducted with the Atlanta Journal Constitution suggests that this is a very tight race here, but that your job approval rating has been high in Georgia. Thirty-three percent of the core Republicans said they're not particularly pleased with your job. Have you in some way let them down? And if you have, how do you get them back in these final 2 weeks?

The President. I think the major problem has been the economy. And we're going to get them back because I think people are going to decide when they go into that voting booth on trust, on proven leadership. I think character is important. And then I think people are going to, in the final analysis, compare economic approaches. I just don't happen to think we need to tax people more and spend more. So I've got to get that in focus.

But look, it's not just the United States, the whole world has been through a tough economic time. This will come as a surprise, perhaps, but we're an interconnected world, and we're leading most of the European economies, the great European economies. Our growth rate is twice what Japan's is. Yet I hear everybody comparing, talking about how great Japan is, and we ought to do better. Of course, we ought to do

better. But we're going to lead the way out of what's been an economic slowdown.

I think the economy has been the major problem for the working men and women in this country, for the unemployed. I believe that our proposals, the agenda for America's renewal, is what's going to change it and make it better.

Mr. Nigut. Well, I promised that I would ask very few questions and give the audience most opportunities. A number of people wanted to ask questions based on last night's debate. These people all watched the debate last night, so I wanted to first turn to a few people who said they had specific followups to last night.

Would you please stand up? You started to talk before about a couple of questions that were lingering after the debate last night.

Iraq

Q. Well, I think that Mr. President has made it an issue of the character and judgment of one of his challengers, and Mr. Perot last night challenged him and was very adamant about maybe his character or judgment. I would like him to respond to the allegations of quote, unquote, Iraqgate or the Glaspie papers. He said that you were dealing with Saddam Hussein, helped build him up and gave him the opportunity to move into Kuwait.

The President. I heard what he said. He also strongly opposed the war, and he said that we had not leveled with the American people on the Glaspie—that was Ambassador Glaspie. Let me tell you something. Every single paper, including Secretary of State's notes, which is unprecedented, was taken up to the United States Congress and looked at in detail. And after the event, Secretary Baker went and explained that to Mr. Perot, who said he hadn't known that.

So I hope that one is cleared up, because you had congressional hearing after congressional hearing. My position on Iraq was we did try to make Saddam Hussein into somebody a little more sane. You know, when the war in Iran and Iraq ended, Saddam Hussein had the fourth largest army. Our Arab friends were saying, "Try to bring him along. We don't need a radical

in our midst. Try to help him.” We had letters, incidentally, from many of the people now critical on trying to sell American grain to Iraq, including the two Senators from Arkansas: “Please sell grain to Iraq on credit.”

Mr. Nigut. Is this an issue that still concerns you?

The President. Can I just finish?

Mr. Nigut. Yes, I’m sorry.

The President. Because what happened is he then refused to come along and do what we encouraged him to do. And we knocked his socks off, thanks to the sons and daughters of Georgia who did what most Americans do: When called, they served, and they served with great distinction. It was a proud moment, and people are now trying to revise it and make it something it’s not.

Mr. Nigut. Are you satisfied? You still have some lingering question?

The Character Issue

Q. Well, no. In the second debate I think that the audience participants tried to keep the character and judgment issue out of the room.

The President. Well, may I respond? Do you think character is not important?

Q. No, I do think it’s important, Mr. President.

The President. But they did try to keep it out of the room, and it belongs on the front page. A President must have character. You know, the way I described it last night, Clinton said it’s not the character of the President but “of the Presidency.” That is absolutely ridiculous. I am judged on my character every single day. Every President must be judged on that. And so must he be judged on his character, and so must Mr. Perot. Character is vital. It is essential, because you have to have the trust of the whole world when you’re President, or lack thereof.

So I’m not going to let some guy stand up and say what I can talk about or what I can’t. I happen to think that every schoolchild ought to think their President has a certain degree of character. Maybe Mr. Clinton’s got it; maybe Mr. Perot’s got it. But certainly it belongs as a matter for discussion.

Mr. Nigut. Let’s move on to another question. We talked to some people in here earlier and most of them said their decision now is between you and Governor Clinton. But a few said they still like Ross Perot, and you were one of them. What did you want to ask the President today?

Domestic Airline Industry

Q. Mr. President, my question is twofold. It involves the airline industry. I would like to know why it appears that we are being so cooperative with foreign airlines and we’ve abandoned the weaker carriers of the United States. One, specifically in the past involving the demise of Eastern Airlines, why did you defy the recommendation of the National Mediation Board to form a Presidential emergency board to address this transportation crisis? And secondly, specifically in the present, why are you promoting policies which appear to give foreign airlines nearly total freedom to invest and operate within the United States with little or nothing in exchange for the United States airlines?

The President. Tell me about the mediation board. Remind me of what that was, would you?

Q. It had to do with investigating Lorenzo’s actions involving the bankruptcy of Eastern Airlines.

The President. I’ll tell you what my philosophy is on these matters. As much as possible, it is to let these disputes be handled by private sector. I don’t believe the Government ought to get in at all times. The one that Mr. Perot was hitting out about last night was an attempt for the British Airways to purchase USAir. You’ve got a major dispute raging. The USAir employees everywhere you go are holding up picket signs, not picket signs but saying, “Hey, protect my job. Let the merger go through.” And then you’ve got the other airlines like Delta, outstanding airline headquartered right here, American Airlines saying, “Wait a minute. It’s not fair to let British come in here under USAir and then not let us have access to the British market.”

Mr. Nigut. Of course, Eastern Airlines’ bankruptcy and the decision not to allow mediators to come in was of enormous con-

cern here in the Atlanta area because we have some 5,000 Eastern employees who lost their jobs.

The President. Sure it is. But my point—I was getting to the point. The point is, all USAir employees are saying, “Let British take over,” and all Delta Airline people are saying, “Don’t do it.” This one has to be resolved by Government because of the routing and all of that. It’s being negotiated now, and I’m not hiding behind this. But it would be most inappropriate for the President to take a position on it while the Department of Transportation is handling it. It will come to me. Everything does. And then you have to say, “I’m for this,” or against it.

But on the other one, I just don’t believe that the Government ought to intervene in all of these things.

Mr. Nigut. All right, thank you, sir.

The President. That’s a big difference we’ve got on some of this philosophy.

Mr. Nigut. Thank you, sir.

The economy everyone identifies as a crucial issue. Does someone in the group want to ask an economic question of the President right now? Who has something they want to—

Improper Display of Canadian Flag

The President. I want a baseball question, if I could.

Mr. Nigut. We do have, actually—

The President. Only because I’ve got a serious thing I want to say.

Mr. Nigut. Go ahead. We’re calling on you because the President mentions baseball. You’ve got your Braves T-shirt on. You get special treatment here today.

The President. You don’t have to ask baseball, but I just want to use this program, Bill, if I can to say something about the flag situation. Maybe I could do it before; then you’d be unfettered by my trying to define what you should ask about.

But here’s the thing on the Canadian flag inadvertently flown upside down. If that had happened in Canada and we’d have seen the United States flag flown upside down, every American would have been very, very upset. This was a mistake. Certainly, nobody would ever do anything like that on purpose.

So what I wanted to use your program for is to say how badly I feel about it, how badly all the American people feel about it, how much we value our friendship with Canada. They are our strongest trading partner in the whole world, and we would do nothing to hurt the national pride of Canada. So, on behalf of all Americans, I simply wanted to apologize to the people of Canada and suggest we try to keep this now, from now on, out of the marvelous baseball rivalry between Atlanta and Toronto. And that’s all I want to say.

Mr. Nigut. How are you going to feel tonight? We are likely to see—they’re planning on flying a lot of American flags upside down tonight in Toronto. How are you going to feel if you see that?

The President. Well, I won’t like it, because when you see the American flag flown upside down, as a person that served in the Armed Forces and fought for my country, I would find that inappropriate. I guess I’d have to say I understand the passions of the Canadians, but I would simply ask them to have the same respect for the American flag that all Americans have for their flag, and recognize, as I said last night, if you make a mistake, whatever it is, hey, say, “I made a mistake,” and get on about the Nation’s business.

But I use this because the Prime Minister of Canada is a wonderful man. He’s a friend to the United States, and he gets pounded in Canada for his friendship. Don’t mistake it; he’s pro-Canadian. I suspect he’s rooting hard for Toronto. But I just wanted him to know how strongly Americans feel. End this discussion now, please.

Social Security

Q. I’m a lunchroom lady, and this is something—I’m really very privileged. How many times do we get that opportunity, you know, us little folks down here? But I am concerned about Social Security. I’m about, well, a little less than 20 years away from it, but I’m concerned about if I’m going to have it when I get up there. And I have a 2-week-old granddaughter that, in 62 years—I know that’s a long time, but she’s going to be there, too, someday. I want to know that we have that available to us

when we're ready for it.

The President. First place, I think you'll remember that I'm the President that said in the State of the Union Message, don't mess with Social Security, don't touch it. Last night, perhaps inadvertently, Governor Clinton said something about those that take out more than they put in ought to do something about it. He may have misspoken, so I want to be fair about that. That's messing with Social Security. Ross Perot has proposed some kind of tax on Social Security. We ought not to mess with it.

It was fixed in a bipartisan agreement under the Reagan administration, I think in '83 or '84, in there. It is solvent well into the—way after the turn of the century, up until about 2030 or something like that. If it needs further adjustments then, it should be fixed then. You'll still be alive, but I don't think I'll be around wrestling with the problem in the year 2030. And we ought not to fool around with it.

In my budget plan, this Agenda for American Renewal, I say we've got to control the growth of these mandatory programs, but set Social Security aside. It's not a welfare program. It originally was to be a supplement to people's incomes. It's sacrosanct.

So I think you can tell your daughter that the system is sound, and if it's not sound when she gets up there, my age, it will be made sound. But the big thing for now is, don't fool around with it, leave it separate as we try to control the growth of other spending programs.

Mr. Nigut. All right, Mr. President. We have a question over here, please.

Urban Initiatives

Q. I would like to know—as you already know, the black people of this Nation and the black African-American people feel that we have been made a mockery of and that our issues are not being faced. We have not been addressed, and we have not had the proper opportunities that we should have in this country. We would, at this time, like to know specifically what you plan to do in order to get our vote this time around. After 12 years of being in office, what do you plan to do this time around to prove

to us that you are capable of being our leader in this next 4 years?

The President. That's a good question. I'm delighted that you're undecided, because so many are traditionally taken for granted by one party. They'll vote the straight lever on the other side and be had by local officials and by the United States Congress.

We've got a good urban program. I don't know if you're talking about urban America. But if you're talking about urban America, the best thing for minority Americans is to bring the jobs into urban America. And we've got this program called enterprise zones. Now we're getting a lot of lip service from the Democrats, but they've been unwilling to pass it. They control the Senate, and they control the House, and they've controlled them both for 38 years.

Enterprise zones says, look, give a tax break to businesses, make it worth their while to come into the urban centers and create jobs. I think our anticrime program benefits minority families more than others because some of those areas are the ones that are most afflicted by bad crime statistics. I think that homeownership is a far better concept than these big public tenements where the residents don't have the pride. I think tenant management, which we have pioneered, is a much better answer to urban hopelessness than having some Government official trying to run the places where people live.

So all of these things, in my view, would raise the quality of life for people. It's not just for minorities, but I think it would disproportionately help the minorities. We've really got a good urban program.

Mr. Nigut. I apologize, sir. We have to pause for a break, and we'll be back with you in just a moment.

[At this point, the television station took a commercial break.]

Mr. Nigut. We're back with our town hall forum with George Bush, President of the United States. We want to get right back to questions. Go ahead.

Mortgage Loan Discrimination

Q. My question is about homeownership. My wife and I hope to become homeowners in the near future and therefore favor the

tax credit to the first-time homebuyer. My question is, how can we as minorities be assured of this tax credit if we can't get equal lending from our banking community?

The President. First place, the first-time homebuyer should be thrilled about my proposal. The way it works is you give a \$5,000 credit to the family that's never owned a home before, for the first time. It is hung up, regrettably, in the Democratic Congress. They will not pass it. And it is the best possible thing that you could do.

Obviously, the credit that you need to buy on the home has to come from your own full faith in credit, your own standing. But this is a major break for homeowners, and besides that, it would stimulate the economy. Along with building homes goes a lot of other industries that outfit the houses and refrigerators and furniture. And so it really is essential. I'm not sure I fully answered your question, but your credit—this won't help your borrowing. It will help it that you have \$5,000 less you'll have to come up with. But it's really stimulative for the housing industry.

Is that it? Did I get to it fully?

Mr. Nigut. I'm sorry. I'm going to walk right in front of the camera to get you here on that.

Q. Well, you touched on it. I'm talking about a couple of weeks ago our local paper ran an article where blacks and other minorities are being discriminated against on the lending, from the lending community. I think it's 18 percent or so, being denied. And the credit standing wasn't one of the biggest issues for denial.

The President. Well, the credit standing should be the only issue for denial. I mean, if you have discrimination against anybody in housing or in loaning, that is against the law, and it must not continue.

Mr. Nigut. What are you suggesting we do? Any ideas—how we enforce—

The President. Well, I'd go right to the local officials here and get something done about it. You're looking at a man who, as a Congressman from Texas, voted for open housing. My view was if you've got kids dying—coming out of the ghettos—in Vietnam—they ought not to come back and find that they couldn't live where they want-

ed to live. So I'm a fair housing person.

You're talking about something that is already against the law, where people discriminate against, lenders, because of their race is what I think you're saying. That is purely against existing Federal law. You ought to go get it enforced by the local law enforcement people and, if they're violating a Federal law, by the Federal law enforcement.

Tax Credit for First-Time Homebuyers

Mr. Nigut. A quick followup on what you've made a big issue out of it in the campaign, and that's your break, your tax credit, for first-time homebuyers. How much does it cost, and how do we pay for it?

The President. It costs very little because it stimulates the whole industry, and when you get industry stimulated you have much more jobs. Frankly, I think it would be income-productive, because housing is going to lead the way out of this slowdown, in some areas, recession. So there is some good news—

Mr. Nigut. But you acknowledge that initially we take a pretty big chunk of income tax—

The President. Not that big. I can't give you the exact figure, but it's not enormous, and it will be far more offset by growth. Housing sales, incidentally, were up yesterday. I don't know; I didn't hear that on the top of the news last night. It may have been in there somewhere, but it's very difficult to get any good news out. That's good news for America.

Mr. Nigut. Let me turn to another question.

The Economy

Q. Four years ago, I voted for you, and I was a freshman in college. And now it's 4 years later, and I just graduated. I've worked really hard in school, and I was looking forward to entering the job market. But I'm very undecided about the whole economic issue, and I'm already discouraged before I've even started. What is your economic plan to have someone offer me who's just entering the job market?

The President. You're caught up in what

has been a global recession. It's not just the United States. I'll take my share of the blame for the United States. I'm not going to take all of it because I think there's a lot of fault as to how things can be better. But this agenda for Americans' renewal that puts emphasis on investment is job-creating. I mentioned the homebuyers tax credit. I might talk about an investment tax allowance; it would stimulate job creation. You know I'm for the capital gains reduction. And the opposition—except I think Mr. Perot may be for it—but the opposition says this is a tax break for the rich. It is not. It is to stimulate entrepreneurship, the creation of new businesses.

So I would suggest that the best answer to the economic recovery which is needed are these incentives that I've proposed as recently as January of this year, all hung up by a Congress that has to win by having things bad. I wouldn't be sitting here probably if the economy was growing at 3.5 or 4 percent, and it's not. But I think these incentives that I proposed are the way to make the economy grow.

Herein I have a big difference with Governor Clinton. He says, "grow the economy," get the Government to use what he calls investment. Government investment does not create the kind of job that you're looking for. It creates bureaucracy.

Mr. Nigut. Have you made a decision at least tentatively about which of the three Presidential candidates you believe has the kind of programs that will make sure you'll find good work down the road?

Q. Well, like I said before, I voted for the President 4 years ago. So to begin with, I was leaning toward him, but now I've gone back and forth just because of the different economic plans. I'm just not sure.

The President. Let me throw in another selling point. *[Laughter]* Four years ago you were a college freshman. Did you ever worry about nuclear war back then? Did you? You worry less about it now. But most kids that vintage, 4 years ago, would share the same fear of nuclear war that their parents had. We've changed all that.

All I ask is to be judged on the whole record, and I really think that's dramatic. Forty-three more countries are free and democratic, since I've become President,

around the world. You've got ancient enemies talking to themselves. That may not affect the job market, but it does affect the climate in which we're going to grow and create opportunity.

Again, I get back to—last night I had this big argument with him about exports. Exports are going to save the job market. They're the only thing that saved it in this slow growth or in a recession.

Health Care

Mr. Nigut. Mr. President, we have a voter here who is very concerned about health care and who has said frankly that he has been a supporter of yours in the past but needs to hear more from you about the whole issue of health care before he makes up his mind.

Q. I think the American people understand your ability as a leader and to lead us in international affairs. I think we understand that that's really second to none, and we appreciate the job that you've done in the last 4 years. We also believe, I think, that if you understand us and our domestic problems as well as you understand the international affairs, that you will do as good a job here as you've done internationally. The question is, have you lost touch with America? Have you lost touch with us?

My case in point is health care. When you have a monopoly such as the health care system, and I do mean monopoly because you have pills that cost, for 20 pills they cost \$500. That's monopoly because without that this person is not going to survive. What do you do about the inequities in the health care system? You want a cap—

Mr. Nigut. *[Inaudible]*—I understand your concern, and you're asking a terrific question. But if we could give the President a chance to respond.

Q. Basically, it's the inequities in the health care system that are there. I can't afford health care in 5 years with the way it's going up. As a middle class person it will be out of sight. I've had a doctor say we can't do an operation for a loved one because I didn't have enough insurance. What's going to happen to the rest of us if middle class America is being squeezed?

The President. That's a very good ques-

tion. Let me tell you, you know why some of the doctors say that, or why the doctors say you've got to have five tests instead of one? Because they're afraid of being sued. They're afraid of these malicious lawsuits. Part of my health reform plan is to put a cap on these malicious lawsuits.

The trial lawyers have a very powerful lobby. And you go look up where the contributions come from. People talk about lobbies and power groups; the trial lawyers are solidly behind Governor Clinton. He refuses to do anything about malpractice. And you're right, \$25 billion to \$50 billion in additional costs come from malpractice.

Now, that's part of the answer. But that's why the doctors are telling you this. Some of them give up practicing medicine. Some people give up coaching Little League because they're afraid of being sued. Some people see a wreck along the highway, and they want to stop and help their fellow man, and they say, "I'm not going to do it because I read about a lawsuit that wiped out a guy like me. I moved his head, and the next thing, he dies, and I'm sued for trying to be a good Samaritan."

Mr. Nigut. Are you convinced that eliminating frivolous lawsuits, or allegedly frivolous lawsuits, are the first big step, or is the problem much larger than that?

Q. I don't think that's the issue. I don't think the people—

The President. I thought you asked about the doctors.

Q. No, I agree that that should be taken care of, but I don't believe the person at the lower income that needs just basic health care is being addressed by attacking the lawsuit issue. They're just worried that—

The President. Well, let me finish then. I got cut off.

Mr. Nigut. Let's let him respond.

The President. I think we have the best health care reform plan. What it does, it provides vouchers to the poorest of the poor. There are a lot of people, 40, 38 million people that have no insurance. It provides insurance to the poorest of the poor. For the middle income, it provides tax credits and breaks, so it's the equivalent of a sustenance there to help you buy insurance. It keeps the Government out of it.

My big argument with Government and Clinton, he wants another Government board to set prices. Anytime you have Government intervention in the market, prices go up. So I believe our health care plan—and I hate guys that say, have you read my speech or looked at my program, and then make you read 30 pages—take a look at it because it does address itself to these ever-increasing costs.

Mr. Nigut. Mr. President, thank you. We've got to take another quick break, and we'll be back after this.

[At this point, the television station took a commercial break.]

Mr. Nigut. We're back with more questions for the President. We talked a little about health care before the break and we have a followup question.

Q. I think all of your proposals for access to health care are great, but we need money now for preventative care. Our funding for AZT ran out this year, and we need money to get into the neighborhoods and teach prenatal care so that we don't have the expensive burdens on the other end. I want to ask how you can help us with that.

The President. Well, I would only refer you to the fact that money from the Federal Government for health care has increased dramatically. The problem you have is you don't have unlimited resources. Take AIDS funding on research, for example. We've doubled, in the last 4 years, the Federal participation in research and treatment and all of this. We're up to \$4.9 billion, 10 times as much for AIDS victims as per cancer victim, what the Federal Government can do. We're operating at these enormous deficits. And so, I'd like to sit here and say, the Federal Government can solve this problem, or the Federal Government can solve the problems of urban America by spending more. I don't believe we can do it.

I think the best thing the Federal Government can do is to continue to be as compassionate as possible on funding for health care. It's way up, believe me; just look at the numbers. But it's got to be done as much as possible by participation of others

also. We cannot do it and then say, "Well, I'm going to get the deficit down." You can't be taxed much more.

So the President is faced with the problem: How do you help these hospitals for the indigent, and yet, how do you protect the taxpayer's wallet. I've concluded that we've got about the right balance for what we can do right now.

Mr. Nigut. What do we spend at a Grady hospital on a baby who is born prematurely because of a lack of prenatal care?

Q. As much as \$100,000 in a year.

Mr. Nigut. So the question, of course, is, are you robbing Peter to pay Paul on this?

The President. I don't get the question.

Mr. Nigut. In the sense that, without prenatal care and spending for prenatal care, you end up getting bigger bills down the road?

The President. Spending for prenatal care—my point is—it's up by the Federal Government. My point is, I don't believe anybody can say the Federal Government alone can solve the problems of prenatal care. We've got a great Secretary of HHS. He comes right from Atlanta, Lou Sullivan, one of the outstanding medical people. He was head of Morehouse College here. I think he's reached about as good a sensitive balance in terms of support for programs like this as he can do, if he is restricted on the funds.

We're operating at such big deficits. I don't like to sound hopeless, but I say we have increased support for all of these things. Somebody's got to be responsible to the taxpayer or to the young woman who is trying to get a job, and they all interact. So I hope we can help more.

Mr. Nigut. All right. We'll try to get a few more questions.

Family Values

Q. I'm a divorced father, and I support four children. During your campaign, you've allowed the Vice President and others to make family values a political issue. I just wondered why you did that. And if you could go back, since you're running a distant second now in the polls, if you could go back, would you change that as being an issue?

The President. Oh, no. No. I think family values is critical. Now, if you're talking about am I trying to define that a one-parent family is no good and two-parent families are perfect, that's not the case. I'm talking about when Mayor Bradley of Los Angeles came to see me, along with other mayors, he said the major concern of urban decay is the decline of family values. He was talking about discipline. He was talking about respect. He was talking about helping people to learn. He was talking about respect for law enforcement. He was talking about strengthening the family through choice, or I'm talking about it, in child care or schools.

So please, I wouldn't go back because I believe family is important. When Barbara reads to these children, she's trying to say, "Hey, parents ought to read to kids." When you talk about discipline, Federal Government can't do that. But respect for the law is a family value, respect for your parents.

So I'm glad you gave me a chance to clear it up because nobody is saying single parents are wrong. My respect for you, supporting four kids is great. My respect for the father that runs away from the mother and leaves her to do it without any support has—I think that's disgraceful. So we're trying to pass laws to reform the welfare system, and I'm glad you gave me a chance to clear it up.

Mr. Nigut. Very quickly—I want to get other people in, but you're shaking your head.

Black Americans

Q. I still don't believe that the issue that I presented to you was answered. I mean, I—

The President. What is your question again, ma'am?

Q. —but I still think you should let us know what can you do to make us believe that you are qualified to be a black Afro-American people President?

The President. Well, I thought I just told you that the best thing to do is to bring jobs and hope to the inner city, to do things different, and to get some people in the Congress that agree with me instead of trying to perpetuate the hopelessness that's brought to bear on some of these neighbor-

hoods.

I think welfare reform is important. I believe making people learn and work when they're on welfare is important. Now, you may disagree with me. But I think dependency on welfare is terrible. Give people a better break in education. Give them a better break in health care. But then let everybody else pitch in and be part of the American dream. I think we're doing tremendous amounts in terms of helping people, and I want to make it so people can help themselves more.

Now, I've told you housing programs and all of this. But maybe we just disagree. But I'd say to black Americans, don't be taken for granted all the time. Don't vote that straight lever and go right down the way your predecessors did, and then wake up in despair. Try something different.

Mr. Nigut. I'm sorry, another question if we can.

School Choice

Q. My statement and question is about education. Seeing that some middle class taxpayers are actually saving the government State and Federal money by making great sacrifices, like my husband and I to send our daughter to private school, could it be possible for some of us that we work so hard to give our children a good education, get a tax break, such as a rebate in school taxes?

Mr. Nigut. I think you've just been served up a home run pitch here, Mr. President. *[Laughter.]*

The President. Well, I have.

Forty-six percent of the public school-teachers in Chicago send their kids to private school. I have a big difference with Governor Clinton on this one. I believe, and our "GI bill" for kids suggests, if it worked for the GI bill for people coming after World War II—the Government said, here's the money, to the family, to the soldiers, and you go to the school of your choice, private, public, or religious. And the State schools got better if they weren't chosen. Public schools, exactly the same thing: Give the parents a voucher, if they go to public school or private school, or religious school. And that then starts, as it has in Milwaukee, competition. And the schools

not chosen, the public schools are getting better. There's a black woman up there named Polly Williams, a big, strong Democrat, and she thinks that her kid was maligned by the public school system. She was given, under their program, choice. She sent that kid to a private school, and now he's a high attainer. The school that wasn't chosen is doing much better because they have to compete. So we've got the program for you.

Q. As far as my question goes, I don't think I quite get—what I was asking is, we, as middle class taxpayers trying to make a sacrifice to send our daughter to private school. It's a misconception that people seem to think that everybody that sends their children to private school is well off or rich, and we are not. My question was, is it possible that in the future you will have a program that will look at us, at middle class Americans trying to work hard—

The President. Our program gives you a break. Our program gives you a break so you can get assistance in sending your—to the school of your choice. School choice, religious, private, public, that's what I favor, and you're just exactly the guy that would benefit from our program. Help me get it through the Congress.

Mr. Nigut. Well, we have so many people, Mr. President, who would like to still ask you questions. Their hands are in the air, but unfortunately, we've come to the end of our time. So what I want to do is finish by saying, thank you very much. We are truly delighted you could be with us tonight.

The President. It's like the last inning. I love baseball. Played it; love it. Remember the last inning of the Braves game when everybody went to the exits, and the Braves knocked it out of the park. Now they're in the World Series. Great pride. That's exactly what's going to happen in this election. So stay tuned.

Mr. Nigut. Last 2 weeks, we'll watch you carefully. Thank you, sir, very much. And thanks to our audience for all their wonderful questions.

Note: The question-and-answer session was

taped at 10:02 a.m. at the WSB-TV studios for evening broadcast. WSB-TV newsman Bill Nigut served as moderator for the session.

Remarks on Beginning a Whistlestop Tour in Norcross, Georgia October 20, 1992

The President. What a great Georgia day. Thank you for that great welcome. It is great to be in the land of the free and the home of the Braves. Thank you all very much.

You know, everywhere I go I see signs that say "Clean House!" We need more Members of Congress like Newt Gingrich. And I'm delighted to have been introduced by him. So send us more like Newt and also, while we're at it, let's clean Senate and elect Paul Coverdell to the United States Senate.

I am very proud to have at my side today the Governor of South Carolina, Carroll Campbell, one of the outstanding Governors in the entire United States. I'm glad he's here, and of course, my friend and supporter in the Senate, Strom Thurmond. I'll tell you, he does a great job for this country. May I thank Brooks Coleman, our master of ceremonies. And may I salute the world's best First Lady, Barbara Bush. I'm proud she's out here today.

Audience members: Barbara! Barbara! Barbara!

The President. And I like all these signs around here. I referred to that one the other night, last night in the debate. I love it. And we're going to show them on November 3d exactly how it works.

You know, baseball is like politics. So forget about all these polls. Forget people telling you how you think. On election day, on election day we're going to show America that it ain't over until Cabrera swings, and that is exactly the way it's going to be.

Anybody out here see the debate last night?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. The thing I like about it is we had a chance to lay out the differences, the choice for the American people: a vast difference between experience,

a vast difference on philosophy, and a vast difference on character and confidence in the United States. I hope I stand for all four, and I challenge my opponent on all four.

You know, there was one scary moment in that debate last night, and that's when Governor Clinton said that he would do for America what he's done for Arkansas. You talk about a real threat.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Here he is, running with Mr. Ozone, Senator Gore, and Arkansas is 50th in the environmental initiatives; 49th in high school dropouts; 45th in overall well-being of children; 75 percent of the kids that graduate from high school have to get remedial reading, remedial education when they go to college; and their income and their jobs and their wages lag the Nation. We cannot let him do for the United States what he's already done to Arkansas.

I've got to admit, I agreed with the feisty little guy from Dallas on one thing, when he said the grocery store is no preparation for Wal-Mart. I thought that was a pretty good line. Let me put it in baseball terms: The Little League ain't any preparation for the Atlanta Braves, either.

You know, we had a chance to talk about the economy. And yes, we've been going through some tough times, but what we don't need is a dose of lousy medicine. He wants to raise taxes by \$150 billion and increase spending by \$220 billion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And we cannot let him do that to the United States.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And you know who's going to pay it. He says, "I'm going to sock the rich." That won't get him any money at all. What he's going to do is sock it to the cab driver and the nurse and the beautician and the housewife. I will protect against all